

IN THE CLAIMS:

34. (currently amended) A piezoelectric actuator comprising: a plurality of piezoelectric elements stacked in a first direction and in a second direction generally perpendicular to the first direction for undergoing expansion/contraction movement to vibrationally drive the piezoelectric elements in accordance with a driving signal applied thereto, the piezoelectric elements being stacked in the second direction without any spaces therebetween, and the length in the first direction of at least one of the piezoelectric elements being different from the length in the first direction of at least one other of the piezoelectric elements; and a plurality of electrodes disposed between the piezoelectric elements stacked in the first direction.

39. (previously presented) A piezoelectric actuator comprising: a plurality of groups of piezoelectric elements stacked in a stacking direction for undergoing expansion/contraction movement to vibrationally drive the piezoelectric elements in accordance with a driving signal applied thereto, each of the groups of piezoelectric elements extending in a longitudinal direction generally perpendicular to the stacking direction, and each piezoelectric element of at least one of the groups of piezoelectric elements having a thickness extending in the stacking direction and a length

different from the thickness thereof and extending in the longitudinal direction; wherein the plurality of groups of piezoelectric elements comprises a first group of piezoelectric elements, a second group of piezoelectric elements disposed on the first group of piezoelectric elements and defining the at least one of the groups of piezoelectric elements, a third group of piezoelectric elements disposed on the second group of piezoelectric elements, and a fourth group of piezoelectric elements disposed on the second group of piezoelectric elements.

40. (previously presented) A piezoelectric actuator according to claim 39; wherein the piezoelectric elements of the third and second groups of piezoelectric elements have the same thickness and length.

41. (previously presented) A piezoelectric actuator according to claim 40; wherein the piezoelectric elements of the first and fourth groups of piezoelectric elements have the same thickness and length.

42. (previously presented) A piezoelectric actuator according to claim 41; wherein the length of each piezoelectric element of the first and fourth groups of piezoelectric elements is one-half the length of each piezoelectric element of the second and third groups of piezoelectric elements.

43. (previously presented) A piezoelectric actuator according to claim 42; wherein each piezoelectric element of the second and third groups of piezoelectric elements is generally rectangular shaped.

44. (previously presented) A piezoelectric actuator according to claim 39; wherein each piezoelectric element of the first, second, third and fourth groups of piezoelectric elements is generally quadrilateral-shaped.

47. (previously presented) A piezoelectric actuator comprising: a cantilever body having a fixed end, a free end opposite the fixed end, a first pair of groups of identical piezoelectric elements, and a second pair of groups of identical piezoelectric elements disposed between the first pair of groups of identical piezoelectric elements, the first and second pairs of groups of identical piezoelectric elements being disposed between the fixed end and the free end for undergoing expansion/contraction movement to vibrationally drive the piezoelectric elements in accordance with a driving signal applied thereto, each of the piezoelectric elements of the first and second pairs of groups of identical piezoelectric elements having the same thickness in a stacking direction of the piezoelectric elements and a length extending

in a direction generally perpendicular to the stacking direction, and the length of each piezoelectric element of the first pair of groups of identical piezoelectric elements being one-half the length of each piezoelectric element of the second pair of groups of identical piezoelectric elements.